

WIRRAL RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

# ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR 1897.

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TO THE WIRRAL RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

The population of the Wirral Rural District, estimated to the middle of the year 1897, is 16,509.

The Births registered as having occurred in the District number 421, being at the rate of 25·5 per 1000 persons living.

In 1896	the number	was	466,
In 1895	„	„	„ 416,
And, In 1894	„	„	„ 444.

The Deaths, exclusive of 11 occurring within the District amongst persons not belonging thereto, number 214.

This is at the rate of 12·96 per 1000 persons living in the District.

In 1896	the Deaths	belonging to the District	were	201,
In 1895	„	„	„	„ 248,
And, In 1894	„	„	„	„ 192.

The percentage of Deaths under one year of age to Births registered is 10·92.

The Death rates are very low. The Deaths include 6 from Scarlatina, 1 from Diphtheria, 2 from Croup, 2 from Typhoid Fever, 1 from Erysipelas, 8 from Measles, 1 from Whooping Cough, 10 from Diarrhoea, 1 from Rheumatic Fever, 17 from Phthisis, 34 from Bronchitis or Pneumonia, 18 from Heart Disease, and 8 from Injuries.

Under the Notification Act were reported 74 cases of Scarlatina, 7 of Diphtheria, 2 of Croup, 14 of Typhoid Fever, and 10 of Erysipelas. 27 of the cases of Scarlatina, 1 of Diphtheria, and 5 of Typhoid Fever were removed to Hospital.

On comparing these figures with the corresponding figures of the previous year, there is noticed a marked diminution in the prevalence of Diphtheria and a considerable increase in Scarlatina.

It is gratifying, however, to find that more use is being made of the Fever Hospital; in 1896 only one case was removed thereto; in 1897 thirty-three.

Moreover, an outbreak in one locality was completely suppressed by the removal of eleven cases, being every case save one, to the Hospital; all the children from the locality were kept from School, but the School, which served for a much larger area, was not closed.

The number of cases of Scarlatina is swollen by simultaneous or successive attacks in the same house; thus, out of the total number, 36 cases occurred in eleven houses. In one group of 5 cases the outbreak was coincident with the arrival of a visitor from Wrexham.

The cases of Typhoid Fever have been few and scattered.

There was no spread of infection attributable to the agencies of milk, or water, or to any common sewerage system. The houses where infectious diseases occurred were visited, removal to Hospital offered, disinfectants supplied as required, warnings against spreading infection issued, children kept from School, removal of insanitary conditions attended to, etc., etc.

I have visited the District frequently and made general and special inspections and investigated outbreaks of infectious disease, and have advised as to various points of detail of an ordinary character in connection therewith.

The extension of building operations throughout the District, consequent upon the ever increasing facilities of access to Liverpool and Birkenhead, from time to time, gives rise to needs for additional sewerage.

The action of the County Council in pressing the enforcement of the Rivers' Pollution Act awakens even the few remaining "sleepy hollows" to the necessity of paying some regard to their sewage outfalls.

Further, the Water Supply of the District is, to an unusual extent for so large an area, dependent on a single Water Company deriving its supply from deep wells. These considerations have all combined to make the District Council deeply interested in the recent improvements being worked out in the purification of sewage.

Although the District has the great advantage of being within reach of deep tidal channels, still access thereto is often costly.

The Council have, by a Sub-Committee, in consequence of my advice thereon, visited several localities where biological filtration is in operation, and their engineers have, by their instructions, prepared plans for constructing experimental works of this character at Prenton, with a view to the process being generally adopted throughout the District, and application is being made for a loan for the purpose of carrying out the works forthwith.

The Joint Hospital Board have engaged Mr. Dibdin to advise them as to the purification of the sewage at the Hospital, and a plan which he has recommended for the purpose is being carried out by the Architect.

With a view to securing co-operation, the District Council have communicated with each of the Parish Councils in their District as to their respective requirements in the way of sewerage and sewerage outfalls. It is possible that by means of the facility with which biological filtration can be worked an alternative may be found to the Fender Valley Sewerage scheme

mentioned in my last annual report, which has not as yet secured the necessary financial support from the landowners.

Samples of water have been taken from the mains of the Water Company in various localities and submitted to the County Analyst and myself for examination, and were found to be of a very high degree of purity, the water being almost absolutely free from organic matter.

The Council continue to contract for the removal of Privy and Ashpit Refuse at Ellesmere Port, Little Sutton, Childer Thornton, Eastham, Heswall, and Upton.

Mr. Wallis continues to give great attention to his duties; these embrace, in addition to the more ordinary sanitary work, the Inspection of Cowsheds and Dairies, in number 260; also of Canal Boats, in number 205, in 12 of which defects were caused to be remedied; also the Inspection of Workshops, the care of sewers and the flushing thereof (with assistance) at Eastham, Ellesmere Port, Heswall, and Upton. These are all carefully engineered sewerage systems and not mere village drains.

Mr. Wallis further reports that 101 complaints were received during the year, 1,685 houses inspected, 290 re-inspected, 129 orders issued for sanitary amendments of houses and premises, 62 houses, etc., cleansed, repaired or whitewashed, 54 disinfected after infectious disease, 38 drains repaired and cleansed, 4 ditto ventilated, 2 privies converted into water-closets, 18 new provided, 18 removals of accumulations of animal or other refuse, 1 animal removed as improperly kept, 1 bakehouse and 7 slaughterhouses regularly inspected, 3 cases of overcrowding dealt with, 1 prosecution, the case adjourned by the Court for the work to be done.


I am, Gentlemen,

Your Obedient Servant,

GEO. A. KENYON, M.B.,

Medical Officer of Health.

Chester, 18th February, 1898.



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